



CALIFORNIA
B o a r d
o f
P s y c h o l o g y

1999/2000
Strategic Plan

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INTRODUCTION

The California Board of Psychology (BOP) dates back to 1958 when the first psychologists were *certified* in the state. In 1967, the Psychology Licensing Law was enacted by the Legislature which: 1) defined and protected the practice of psychology, 2) protected the title “psychologist” and 3) changed certification to licensure. It was at this time that regulatory boards shifted their primary focus to protection of the public. The BOP is one of approximately thirty regulatory entities which exist under the organizational structure of the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA). Historically, the BOP has been closely affiliated with the Medical Board of California.

The BOP consists of nine members (five licensed psychologists and four public members) who serve four-year terms (a maximum of two terms). The Governor appoints the five licensed members and two public members. Another public member is appointed by the Senate Rules Committee, and the fourth by the Speaker of the Assembly. Public members cannot be licensed by the BOP or by any other DCA healing arts board.

The BOP appoints an executive officer as its administrator. The executive officer serves solely in the interests of the consumers of psychological services in California as does the BOP. The executive officer oversees the board's civil service staff and ensures that all of its programs function efficiently and effectively.

The BOP is funded totally through license, application, and examination fees. It receives absolutely no tax money from the General Fund of the State of California.

The BOP regulates over 16,000 licensed psychologists, over 2,000 registered psychological assistants and approximately 200 Registered Psychologists.

Licensed psychologists may practice psychology independently in any setting and must possess a doctoral degree which meets licensure requirements and must have successfully completed 3,000 hours of qualifying supervised professional experience. To renew a license, a psychologist must complete 36 hours of approved continuing education every two years and meet a laws and ethics course requirement every two years.

Psychological assistants are unlicensed individuals who are registered to a licensed psychologist or to a board certified psychiatrist as an employee to provide limited psychological services under the licensed psychologist's direct supervision. Psychological assistants must possess at least a qualifying master's degree.

Registered psychologists must possess a doctoral degree which meets licensure requirements and must have completed at least 1,500 hours of qualifying supervised professional experience. Registered psychologists are registered only to function at non-profit community agencies which receive a minimum of 25 percent of their funding from some governmental source. Registered psychologists may not function outside of this restricted and specifically defined setting.

MISSION

The California Board of Psychology protects the health, safety and welfare of consumers of psychological services.

VISION

The California Board of Psychology will assure the protection of consumers of psychological services through its licensing, enforcement and educational outreach programs. These programs will set examples of efficiency through evolving technologies and professional standards. All consumers will have access to the highest quality psychological services.

BOP FUNCTIONS

The BOP is dedicated to ensure that psychologists provide safe, effective and ethical psychological services to consumers. The BOP's activities fall into four broad categories.

Examination and Licensing

The BOP works to ensure that those entering the profession of psychology possess minimal competency to practice psychology independently and safely. This is achieved by requiring applicants for a license to possess an appropriate doctorate degree from an approved or accredited university, college, professional school or comparable educational institution and by requiring the completion of a minimum of 3,000 hours of supervised professional experience. Each license applicant must also pass a national written examination and a California oral examination which are both undergoing a continuous process of establishing validity.

Enforcement

The BOP's enforcement efforts are focused on protecting the vulnerable consumer population from exploitative, incompetent and otherwise dangerous practitioners. The BOP investigates and mediates consumer complaints. When no patient harm has occurred, complaints may be closed with a verbal or written warning, a competency examination or an educational review. Other more serious complaints may result in disciplinary action — reprimand, probation, suspension, or revocation — against the licensee. Proven or admitted sexual misconduct with a patient results in mandatory license revocation. The board's citation and fine program provides another tool that bolsters enforcement options.

Continuing Education

Continued competency by licensees is assured through mandatory continuing education requirements. The law requires that licensees certify to earning 36 hours of continuing education every two years upon license renewal. The board's recognized accreditation agency is the California Psychological Association's Mandatory Continuing Education Program Accrediting Agency (MCEPAA). The accrediting agency approves providers pursuant to the board's regulations and tracks units of continuing education earned by every psychologist. The accrediting agency provides the board with quarterly lists of those licensees who are deficient in continuing education requirements. The board conducts a 100 percent audit on all such deficient licensees.

Education and Outreach

The BOP ensures that consumers are educated to make informed choices about psychological services through information provided on the Board's website through various brochures, press releases for every disciplinary decision, historical listing of all Board actions, on-line verification of licensure and registration, public service announcements and the BOP Update. In addition, the Board educates the profession on the latest regulatory and legislative changes through the Internet and speaking engagements at educational institutions, professional associations and other organizations.

STRATEGIC GOALS

The BOP has established six strategic goals which provide the framework for furthering its mission.

Enforcement

Ensure that exploitative, negligent, incompetent and unlicensed practice of psychology is reduced through proactive, timely and consistent enforcement of the Psychology Licensing Law and the BOP's regulations. Ensure that the Psychology Licensing Law and the BOP's regulations are current and up-to-date in defining causes for discipline and the practice of psychology. (Target Date: Ongoing)

Licensing/ Examinations

Ensure that all applicants are minimally qualified to provide psychological services with safety to the public. (Target Date: Ongoing)

Continuing Education

Ensure that all licensees earn 36 units of continuing education every renewal period. Conduct audit on all licensees and warn those who are not in compliance. Utilize cite and fine if warnings are not sufficient. Conduct annual audits of the Board's recognized accrediting agency. (Target Date: Ongoing)

Education and Outreach

Educate consumers to make informed choices about psychological services. Make available current up-to-date information about the regulation of the profession of psychology to licensees, applicants, trainees and any other interested parties. Assist consumers to better understand the processes and procedures of the Family Court system used to resolve child custody disputes. (Target Date: Ongoing)

Regulation & Legislation

Ensure that all statutes and regulations are necessary, clear, and equitable to consumers, applicants, licensees and registrants. Monitor all legislative/regulatory proposals and ensure that all fiscal workload issues are anticipated. (Target Date: Ongoing)

Operational Efficiency

Increase organizational efficiency and cost effectiveness. Enhance the Consumer Affairs and Applicant Tracking Systems. Cooperate with the Department of Consumer Affairs in the development and implementation of the Integrated Consumer Protection System. (Target Date: Ongoing)

ACTION PLAN

The action plan is a evolving framework for the activities that are conducted by the BOP in fulfilling its mission and meeting its goals.

ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

Goal

Ensure that incompetent, negligent or otherwise dangerous and unethical psychological services and unlicensed activity are minimized through proactive and consistent enforcement of the Psychology Licensing Law and the BOP's Regulations.

Board Committee Lead Responsibility

Enforcement Committee

Strategic Objectives

1. Ensure that all active probationers are interviewed twice each year to confirm compliance with all terms of probation. (Target Date: 7/1/00)
2. Ensure that a Board representative meets with new probationers at their professional offices within 30 days of the effective decision date to fully explain the terms of probation. (Target Date: 7/1/00)
3. Conform to new federal law requiring the electronic reporting of all Board decisions to a federal data bank (HIPDB). (Target Date: 6/30/01)
4. For educational purposes, provide information to all licensees who are the subjects of closed investigations where concerns were noted. (Target Date: 6/30/01)
5. Explore the possibility of using Live Scan statewide to reduce the long wait for fingerprint checks by the Department of Justice. (Target Date: 6/30/01)
6. Explore the feasibility of the Board of Psychology taking over its own complaint processing from the Medical Board of California. (Target Date: 6/30/01)
7. Write a budget change proposal to acquire the funds necessary to require that new expert case reviewers come to Sacramento for an initial half-day training. The Board would need to pay for travel, etc. Enforcement staff, Executive Officer and In-House Consultant would explain administrative process and review expert training binder. (Target Date: 8/15/00)

Ongoing Objectives

1. Continue to respond and resolve complaints in a timely and efficient manner.
2. Educate consumers through prompt and relevant press releases, consumer brochures, Internet presence, the BOP Update and continue participation in the Local Talk program.
3. Increase advocacy through public presentations, Internet presence, BOP Update and educate the profession on the risks of practicing without complying with all the laws affecting the current practice of psychology.
4. Develop and monitor statistics on all enforcement activities.
5. Utilize cite and fine and the telephone disconnect law for unlicensed activity.
6. Assure 100 percent probationer compliance.
7. Revoke the license or registration of any licensee or registrant who engages in sexual contact with a current patient or with a patient whose therapy has been terminated within two years.
8. Review and evaluate billing accountability and efficiency of Medical Board complaint intake and processing.
9. Review and evaluate billing accountability and efficiency of Medical Board investigations.
10. Review and evaluate billing accountability and efficiency of the Office of Attorney General.
11. Review and evaluate billing accountability and efficiency of the Office of Administrative Hearings.
12. Offer board expertise and participation in any training for investigators, Deputy Attorneys General and Administrative Law Judges.
13. Provide training for expert case reviewers.
14. Continue to report disciplinary actions to ASPPB National Data Bank.

15. Update Disciplinary Guidelines continuously.
16. Continue to require fingerprint card clearances pursuant to policy # L-98-03.
17. Provide licensing and enforcement information on the Board's website for consumer verification.
18. Continue to train and administer the expert component of the enforcement program.
19. Ensure sufficient travel expenses for unplanned, unexpected in-state or out-of-state travel required for staff to testify in court for administrative matters.
20. Continue to collaborate with the California Judicial Council to enhance consumer understanding of the processes involved in child custody evaluations.
21. Continue to ensure that complainants are notified of each significant stage in the administrative process (i.e., complaint received, investigation initiated, case closure, transmittal to AG, Accusation filed, Decision rendered).

Potential Performance Indicators

1. More/Less victims coming forward to support ongoing cases.
2. Reduced/Increased number of repeat actions for unlicensed activities and formerly disciplined licensees/registrants.
3. Increased/Decreased Website hits.
4. Increase/Decrease in number of complaints filed

LICENSING/EXAMINATION PROGRAM

Goal

Ensure that all licensees and registrants are minimally qualified to provide psychological services with safety to the public.

Board Committee(s) Lead Responsibility

Credentials Committee
Examination Committee
Supervision Committee

Strategic Objectives

1. Overhaul and streamline supervision regulations. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
2. Study the feasibility of developing oral examination commissioner training video. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
3. Develop a supervision brochure once 1387 (supervision regulations) is clarified. (Target Date: 6/30/01)
4. Analyze historical reports of individual oral examiners for pass/fail statistics and phase out any examiners with an unusually high bias in either direction. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
5. Develop and implement training guidelines for oral examiners - both new and experienced examiners. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
6. Write Budget Change Proposal for Exam Coordinator (AGPA) position. (Target Date: 8/15/00)
7. Develop desk manuals for Licensing Coordinator and Licensing Analyst positions. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
8. Develop policy manual for all historical Board-approved and Legal Office interpretations of various laws and regulations concerning application processing. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
9. Work with DCA to implement "Live Scan" fingerprinting as soon as it is available. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
10. Develop program so that all application forms for licensure or registration can be electronically transmitted over the Board's website. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
11. Work with the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards to computerize the administration of the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology. (Target Date: 6/30/01)
12. Consider allowing applicants to take the EPPP as soon as the doctoral requirements are met. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
13. Consider administering the oral exam and written jurisprudence exam more frequently. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
14. Consider administering the written jurisprudence exam for ALL applicants for licensure in addition to the other exams. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
15. Write Budget Change Proposal for EPPP fee increase. (Target Date: 08/15/00)

Ongoing Objectives

1. Maximize use of Internet and other technology to provide relevant and timely information to consumers, trainees, applicants, psychologists, psychological assistants and registrants
2. Maintain increased efficiency and customer service with technology and enhanced training.
3. Provide timely and quality responses and information regarding:
 - ◆ Applications and processing;
 - ◆ Renewals;
 - ◆ Testing;
 - ◆ License issuance; and
 - ◆ Relevant records and retrieval ability
 - ◆ Examination appeals
4. Utilize the Applicant Tracking System to develop necessary management statistical reports and to ensure timeliness in application processing.
5. Continue to enhance ATS and update the procedure manual as needed.
6. Ensure that supervised professional experience requirements are relevant to the current day practice of psychology.
7. Develop, monitor and enhance statistics from the licensing program.
8. Ensure that examination fees cover the costs of the developing, purchasing, grading and administering the examinations.
9. Ensure continued written and oral examination enhancements through continued close collaboration with the DCA Office of Examination Resources (OER).
10. Conduct legally defensible written and oral examinations to test for minimal competency.
11. Continue to conduct exit surveys for candidates and commissioners.
12. Ensure quality training for oral commissioners.
13. Ensure that oral examiner selection criteria is met.
14. Proactively communicate with psychology training programs and internships.
15. Continue to provide on-line licensing/enforcement verification capability.
16. **Develop a bank of valid jurisprudence questions.**

Performance Indicators

1. Reduced/Increased processing time and increased quality review.
2. Increased/Decreased efficiency in examination scheduling and license issuance.
3. Reduced/Increased number of examination appeals
4. Decrease/Increase in number of telephone calls to the BOP from applicants and initial licensees/registrants.
5. Positive/Negative feedback from exit polls.
6. Increase/Decrease in Website hits.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Goal

Ensure continuing competence of all licensees.

Board Committee Lead Responsibility

Continuing Education Committee

Strategic Objectives

1. Consider allowing CE credit for appropriate community service.

Ongoing Objectives

1. Work with MCEPAA to update CE regulations as needed.
2. Perform annual audit of the board recognized accrediting agency.
3. Work with APA on common interests.
4. Update procedure manual for Continuing Education Technician as needed.
5. Staff is to provide quarterly reports to the Board for monthly renewals to include:
 - A. Number of renewals
 - B. Number of deficient licensees
 - C. Number of deficient licensees who made up deficiency
6. Continue to provide feedback of course quality to MCEPAA.
7. Ensure follow-up on all CE deadlines mentioned in deficient letters
8. Maintain all Part 3 renewal certifications for ____ years
9. Maintain files/requests for waiver/correspondence for _____ years
10. Use cite and fine for repeat CE offenders

Performance Indicators

1. Decrease/Increase in the number of deficient licensees.
2. Decrease/Increase in the number of consumer complaints alleging incompetence.
3. Decrease/Increase in the number of complaints by continuing education providers and participants.
4. Decrease/Increase in Website hits.
5. Decrease/Increase in the number of telephone calls to the Board for general info.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Goal

Educate consumers to make informed choices about psychological services.
Ensure that the profession is continuously aware of the actions of the BOP with respect to licensing requirements, regulation promulgation and interpretation, policy statements and general information affecting trainees, applicants, registrants and licensees.

Board Committee Lead Responsibility

Consumer Education Committee

Strategic Objectives

1. Develop programs to inform the public about the principals of informed consent. (Target Date: 6/30/01)
2. Develop programs to inform the public about the differences in therapeutic techniques. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
3. Develop programs to inform the public about the differences in mental health specialties. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
4. Develop, implement and distribute annual consumer educational brochure for consumer education and protection. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
5. Develop public service message. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
6. For educational purposes, provide information to all licensees who are the subjects of closed investigations where concerns were noted. (Target Date: 01/01/01)

Ongoing Objectives

1. Invite various speakers to BOP meetings to continuously update BOP members on latest trends related to the regulation of the profession
2. Enhance and continuously update the Board's Internet website to disseminate BOP information and educational materials to the public.
3. Continue consultation relationship with DCA Communications and Education Division.
4. Publish BOP Update on semi-annual basis.
5. Continue speaking engagements with educational institutions, organizations, training programs and consumer groups.
6. Continue with press releases for every final enforcement case.
7. Ensure that information relating to the regulation of the profession of psychology is available for use by all who may be affected by the information.
8. Maintain communication with other DCA boards, professional associations and educational institutions.
9. Include summaries of statutory, regulatory and policy changes in BOP Update and Website.
10. Proactively communicate with psychology training programs and internships.
11. Continue to offer on-line licensing and enforcement verification on the Board's website.
12. Continue to meet with the California Judicial Council to enhance consumer understanding of the processes involved in child custody evaluations.

Performance Indicators

1. Increased/Decreased inquiries to verify licensure.
2. Increased/Decreased coverage of BOP cases in response to press releases.
3. Increased/Decreased coverage consumer complaints.
4. Reduction/Increase in repeat offenses in such things as violation of supervision regulations.

5. Positive/Negative trends in applicant and licensee satisfaction surveys.
6. Increase/Decrease in Website hits

REGULATION & LEGISLATION

Goal

Ensure that all statutes and regulations are necessary and easily understandable and equitable to consumers and the profession.

Board Lead Responsibility

Regulation and Legislation Committee

Strategic Objectives

Regulations

1. Amend section 1391.6(b) to require supervisors of psychological assistants, registered psychologists and interns to get a signed release from patients so that supervisors are authorized to access their psychological assistants' records. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
2. Add a regulation that would require registered psychologists to notify the Board within 30 days of termination of the registration. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
3. Clean up section 1381.5 - it repeats the phrase "upon the filing of a new application" twice. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
4. Clean up section 1391.7 - it refers to section 2914(d) and should refer to section 2914(c). (Target Date: 01/01/01)
5. Clean up section 1388.6(b) - change "has been licensed" to "is licensed." (Target Date: 01/01/01)
6. Amend section 1380.5 - Filing of Address to define "immediately" as "within 30 days." (Target Date: 01/01/01)
7. Amend 1397.69 - Continuing Education - Participant Fees - Currently states that the \$35.00 fee is to be paid to an accrediting agency to report non-accrediting agency-approved courses taken by participant as defined in sections 1397.61(d), 1397.63(b) and 1397.64(a)(2)(C). However, section 1397.63(b) states that any licensee who receives approved continuing education credit by serving as an oral commissioner shall submit verification and the course attendee fee specified in section 1397.68 "Provider Fees." It does not refer back to section 1397.69. These sections conflict. We need to change either section 1397.63(b) or 1397.69. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
8. Amend section 1397.70 to clarify what happens when a licensee is non-compliant with the continuing education regulations for six months. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
9. Amend 1396.4 to require licensees to post their licenses at their principle practice location. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
10. Consider allowing licensees to earn some CE by doing appropriate community service. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
11. Fee increase for written exam. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
12. Overhaul and streamline Section 1387 (the supervision regulations). (Target Date: 01/01/01)
13. Overhaul and streamline Section 1391 (the psychological assistant regulations) to provide consistency with Section 1387 (supervision regulations). (Target Date: 06/30/01)
14. Amend Section 1385 to reflect how the Board reviews foreign degrees. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
15. Amend Section 1387.6(a) to require a 7-hour course rather than a semester or quarter. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
16. Revise passpoint for computer-administered EPPP. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
17. Address "sex with former patient" prohibition in regulation. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
18. Amend regulations to require that all requests for reconsideration of oral examinations shall be based solely on alleged procedural errors that have adversely affected the outcome of the examinations. (Target Date: 01/01/01)

Legislation

1. Add section 2960(s) to add incompetence as a cause for disciplinary action. (Target Date: 01/01/01)
2. Clean up amendment to section 2962(a)(4) - needs to read "at least one year for early termination of probation" rather than "or probation." (Target Date: 01/01/01)
3. Seek legislation to require licensees to release patient records within 15 days of receiving the request and authorization signed by the patient to the BOP or the licensee may pay a civil penalty of \$1,000 per day for each day that the documents have not been produced (see Medical Board statute 2225.5 B&P). (Target Date: 01/01/01)
4. Amend B&P Code Section 2946 to delete word "oral" and to add "5 years post-licensure in another jurisdiction." (Target Date: 06/30/01)

Ongoing Objectives

1. Review and amend all regulations pursuant to the following six criteria:
 - a. Necessity: Is there demonstrated evidence that there is a need for the regulation?
 - b. Authority: Does the BOP have legislated authority to adopt the regulation?
 - c. Consistency: Does the regulation conflict with other regulations or statutes?
 - d. Clarity: Can the regulations be easily understood by those affected?
 - e. Non-duplication: Do the regulations duplicate other regulations or statutes?
 - f. Reference: Which statute does the regulation implement, interpret, or make specific?
2. Design legislative/regulation strategies to achieve the mission of the BOP.
3. Update Disciplinary Guidelines continuously (last done 12/99).
4. Enhance and improve supervision regulations (1387).
5. Amend regulations to improve and clarify the continuing education requirements.
6. Keep legislators informed.

Performance Indicators

1. Enhanced/Decreased clarity in definition of the practice of psychology.
2. Increase/Decrease in Website hits.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Goal

Increase organizational efficiency and cost effectiveness

Board Committee Lead Responsibility

Executive Officer

Strategic Objectives












1. Participate in the new Integrated Consumer Protection System (ICPS) if the opportunity is presented. (Target Date: 06/30/01)
2. Explore the possibility of acquiring the resources necessary to transfer all paper records to CD Rom files. (Target Date: 06/30/01)

Ongoing Objectives

1. Strengthen staff training and development.
2. Update board member and employee orientation package.
3. Continue efforts to reduce costs of operations while improving performance.
4. Review and evaluate budgetary documents to identify errors and potential cost-saving measures.
5. Conduct periodic progress review of BOP's strategic plan to determine goal completion.
6. Ensure equipment and technology are current.
7. Amend employee duty statements and desk manuals as duties change.
8. Update policy binder as needed upon BOP adoption.
9. Evaluate Executive Officer's performance annually.
10. Provide staff with annual performance evaluations.
11. Provide Board member training as issues arise.
12. Represent Board at all necessary out-of-state and in-state ASPPB, APA, CLEAR, etc. meetings.
13. Send out annual reminders to all delinquent licensees.
14. Review and evaluate efficiency of various DCA support services (Renewal systems, cashiering, information services).
15. Annually update agenda mailing list.
16. Continue to offer on-line enforcement and licensing/registration information on the Board's website.

BOP'S EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Although this strategic plan did not include a formal survey of external stakeholders, the board drew upon the following information to identify factors and trends which are likely to influence the environment in years to come:







-  Number and type of complaints received and causes for discipline rendered
-  Feedback from professional organizations, schools, licensees, registrants, applicants and training institutions
-  Queries and other contacts with consumers
-  The media image of psychologists
-  The effects of the Internet
-  Legislative and political trends
-  Relationship with the Department of Consumer Affairs
-  Managed care
-  The effects of psychologists potentially obtaining prescription privileges
-  Issues surrounding Family Court procedures
-  Ensuring quality mental health services for victims of crimes

All these elements were listed, discussed, and rated. The most critical were distilled in the Strategic Issues which are listed in this document.



BOP'S INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

In developing the Strategic Plan, the BOP assessed the internal factors which either support or limit the achievement of its mission.

Strengths

-  Dedicated, experienced and competent staff
-  Cooperation from professional associations
-  Innovative new ideas
-  Good working relationship and reputation with DCA, Medical Board investigations and with the Office of the Attorney General
-  Board and staff commitment to consumer protection
-  Informative website - use of technology

Weaknesses

-  Small staff size relative to work load.
-  Red tape:
 - a) Mandatory approval by Department of Personnel Administration of represented employees' hotel room rates
 - b) Regulatory Process